IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1 - 28. (Previously Cancelled)

29. (Currently Amended) A wheel and overlay assembly comprising:

a wheel having a central axis and an outboard surface defined by

a disk portion;

a rim portion circumscribing said disk portion; and

means for attaching said rim portion to said disk portion;

said rim portion having a truncated axially-extending rim flange terminating in a flange lip defining a radially outermost edge thereof, wherein at least a portion of said flange lip extends substantially perpendicular with respect to said central axis of said wheel;

said disk portion, rim portion, truncated rim flange and flange lip defining said outboard surface of said wheel;

an overlay having:

an outboard surface juxtaposed said outboard surface of said wheel;

an inboard surface complementary to and facing said outboard surface of said wheel;

a web portion and a peripheral flange portion terminating in a peripheral lip, said peripheral lip having a radially outermost edge defining a thickness between said inboard and said outboard surface, said radially outermost edge of said flange lip of said overlay defining an outside diameter smaller by a predetermined margin than the outside diameter defined by said radially outermost edge of said flange lip of said truncated rim flange of said wheel regardless of tolerance variation of said overlay and said wheel when said overlay is attached to said wheel**[[;]]**, said inboard surface of said overlay facing said flange lip of said truncated rim flange of said wheel, and wherein

said peripheral lip overlays only a portion of said portion of the flange lip that extends substantially perpendicular to said wheel axis; and

means for attaching said overlay to said wheel, said attaching means disposed between said outboard surface of said wheel and said inboard surface of said overlay, said means for attaching said overlay to said wheel comprising at least one permanent adhesive disposed between said outboard surface of said wheel and said inboard surface of said overlay for permanently securing said overlay to said wheel;

whereby said overlay gives a visible impression that said outboard surface of said overlay is actually said outboard surface of said wheel and not a separately attached component of said wheel and overlay assembly, and further whereby tire changing equipment is prevented from touching said outboard surface of said overlay during tire changes and still further whereby damage to said cladding as a result of adjacent assemblies coming into contact with one another in material handling of said wheel and overlay assembly during normal production and/or transportation of said assembly is significantly reduced.

30. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 29, wherein said radially outermost edge of said peripheral lip of said overlay is aligned with said radially outermost edge of said flange lip of said wheel within a circumferential margin of about 1.2 to 1.5 millimeters having a bilateral tolerance of about 0.8 millimeters.

31. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 30, wherein said radially outermost edge of said peripheral lip of said overlay is aligned with said radially outermost edge of said flange lip of said wheel further within a circumferential margin of 0.2 millimeters having a unilateral tolerance of about 1.6 millimeters.

32. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 29, wherein said overlay is spaced away from said wheel by an adhesive/sealant bead means and is attached to said wheel with a selectively deposited adhesive.

33. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 29, wherein said overlay further comprises:

at least one offset integral with said inboard surface of said overlay, said at least one offset locating said overlay relative to said rim flange of said wheel.

34. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 32, wherein said at least one permanent adhesive is an adhesive means comprising an adhesive bead along the outside diameter of said assembly and a foam adhesive filling the space between said outboard surface of said wheel and said inboard side of said overlay.

35. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 29, wherein said overlay includes a heat-resistant metal-plated finish.

36. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 29, wherein said overlay includes a heat-resistant paint finish.

37. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 29, wherein said overlay includes a weatherable material with no finish applied thereto.

38. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 29, wherein said wheel is composed of a metal material.

39. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 29, wherein said overlay is composed of a metal material.

40. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 29, wherein said overlay is composed of a plastic material.

41. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 29, wherein said peripheral flange portion of said overlay and said rim flange of said wheel combine to

define industry standard dimensions that meet attachment requirements for industry standard wheel balance weights.

42. (Currently Amended) A wheel and overlay cladding assembly comprising:

wheel having an outboard surface defined by

a disk portion;

a rim portion circumscribing said disk portion; and

means for attaching said rim portion to said disk portion;

said rim portion having a minimum functional flange height rim flange terminating in a radially extending flange lip defining an outside diameter of said rim portion;

an axial protrusion extending radially outward from said rim portion and radially spaced from said flange lip;

said disk portion, rim portion and flange lip defining said outboard surface of said wheel;

an overlay having:

an outboard surface juxtaposed said outboard surface of said wheel;

an inboard surface complementary to said outboard surface of said wheel;

a web portion and a peripheral flange portion terminating in a peripheral lip, said peripheral lip having a terminal edge defining a thickness between said inboard and said outboard surface, said terminal edge thickness facing said outboard surface of said wheel when said overlay is attached to said wheel; and

means for attaching said overlay to said wheel, said attaching means disposed between said outboard surface of said wheel and said inboard surface of said overlay, said means for attaching said overlay to said wheel comprising at least one permanent adhesive disposed between said outboard surface of said wheel and said inboard surface of said overlay for permanently securing said overlay to said wheel;

said outboard surface of said overlay defining an outer diameter of said overlay smaller by a predetermined margin than said outside diameter defined by said

radially extended flange lip of said minimum functional flange height rim flange of said wheel regardless of tolerance variation of said overlay and said wheel;

whereby said overlay gives a visible impression that said outboard surface of said overlay is actually said outboard surface of said wheel and not a separately attached component of said wheel and overlay assembly and further whereby damage to the overlay is reduced by tire changing equipment that mounts on the extreme periphery of the standard rim flange of the wheel or material handling of said wheel assembly during production and/or transportation of said assembly will prevent said cladding from damage by adjacent assemblies contacting each other.

43. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 42, wherein said predetermined margin is about 1.2 to 1.5 millimeters having a bilateral tolerance of about 0.8 millimeters.

44. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 43, wherein said outer diameter of said overlay is substantially equal to said outside diameter of said wheel within a predetermined margin of 0.2 millimeters having a unilateral tolerance of about 1.6 millimeters.

45. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 42, wherein said overlay is spaced away from said wheel by an adhesive/sealant bead means and attached to said wheel with a selectively deposited adhesive.

46. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 42, wherein said overlay further comprises:

at least one offset integral with said inboard surface of said overlay, said at least one offset locating said overlay relative to said rim flange of said wheel.

47. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 45, wherein said adhesive is an adhesive means comprising a bead adhesive along the outside diameter

and a foam adhesive filling the space between said outside surface of said wheel and inboard surface of said overlay.

48. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 42, wherein said overlay includes a heat-resistance metal-plated finish.

49. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 42, wherein said overlay includes a heat-resistant paint finish.

50. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 42, wherein said overlay includes a weatherable material with no finish applied thereto.

51. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 42, wherein said wheel is composed of a metal material.

52. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 42, wherein said peripheral flange portion of said overlay and said rim flange of said wheel combine to define industry standard dimensions that meet attachment requirements for industry standard wheel balance weights.

53. (Currently Amended) A wheel and overlay assembly comprising:

a wheel having a central axis and an outboard surface defined by

a disk portion;

a rim portion circumscribing said disk portion; and

means for attaching said rim portion to said disk portion;

said rim portion having a truncated axially-extending rim flange terminating in a flange lip defining a radially outermost edge thereof, wherein at least a portion of said flange lip extends substantially perpendicular with respect to said central axis of said wheel;

said disk portion, rim portion, truncated rim flange and flange lip defining said outboard surface of said wheel;

an overlay having:

an outboard surface juxtaposed said outboard surface of said wheel;

an inboard surface complementary to and facing said outboard surface of said wheel;

a web portion and a peripheral flange portion terminating in a rim flange having an axially extending peripheral flange lip, said axially extending peripheral flange lip being nested with said truncated axially extending rim flange of said wheel and occupying the removed portion of said truncated rim flange of said wheel, said axially extending peripheral flange lip having a radially outermost edge, said radially outermost edge of said axially extending flange lip of said rim flange of said overlay defining an outside diameter of said overlay smaller by a predetermined margin than the outside diameter defined by said radially outermost edge of said flange lip of said truncated rim flange of said wheel when said overlay is attached to said wheel, and wherein said peripheral lip overlays only a portion of said portion of the lip flange that extends substantially perpendicular to said wheel axis; and

means for attaching said overlay to said wheel, said attaching means disposed between said outboard surface of said wheel and said inboard surface of said overlay, said means for attaching said overlay to said wheel comprising at least one permanent adhesive disposed between said outboard surface of said wheel and said inboard surface of said overlay for permanently securing said overlay to said wheel;

whereby said overlay gives a visible impression that said outboard surface of said overlay is actually said outboard surface of said wheel and not a separately attached component of said wheel and overlay assembly, and further whereby tire changing equipment is prevented from touching said outboard surface of said overlay during tire changes and still further whereby damage to said cladding as a result of adjacent assemblies coming into contact with one another in material handling of said wheel and overlay assembly during normal production and/or transportation of said assembly is significantly reduced.

54. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 53, wherein said radially outermost edge of said peripheral lip of said overlay is aligned with said radially outermost edge of said flange lip of said wheel within a circumferential margin of about 1.2 to 1.5 millimeters having a bilateral tolerance of about 0.8 millimeters.

55. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 54, wherein said radially outermost edge of said peripheral lip of said overlay is aligned with said radially outermost edge of said flange lip of said wheel further within a circumferential margin of 0.2 millimeters having a unilateral tolerance of about 1.6 millimeters.

56. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 53, wherein said overlay is spaced away from said wheel by an adhesive/sealant bead means and is attached to said wheel with a selectively deposited adhesive.

57. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 53, wherein said overlay further comprises:

at least one offset integral with said inboard surface of said overlay, said at least one offset locating said overlay relative to said rim flange of said wheel.

58. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 56, wherein said at least one permanent adhesive is an adhesive means comprising an adhesive bead along the outside diameter of said assembled overlay and wheel and a foam adhesive filling the space between said outboard of said wheel and said inboard surface of said overlay.

59. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 53, wherein said overlay includes a heat-resistant metal-plated finish.

60. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 53, wherein said overlay includes a heat-resistant paint finish.

61. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 53, wherein said overlay includes a weatherable material with no finish applied thereto.

62. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 53, wherein said wheel is composed of a metal material.

63. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 53, wherein said overlay is composed of a metal material.

64. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 53, wherein said overlay is composed of a plastic material.

65. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 53, wherein said axially extending peripheral flange lip is defined by industry standard dimensions that meet attachment requirements for industry standard wheel balance weights.

66. (Original) The wheel and overlay assembly as claimed in Claim 53, wherein said axially extending peripheral flange of said overlay is adapted to accommodate complete attachment of an industry standard balance weight thereto, without having to attach said industry standard balance weight to said wheel rim flange.